

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
USMISSION USNATO
USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECRETARYS PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, CSCE, UR, US.

SUBJECT: TASS AND SOVIET MEDIA ON SHCHARANSKIY AND
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FILATOV

SUMMARY. SOVIET DOMESTIC NEWS MEDIA BROKE THEIR THREE-
DAY SILENCE ON THE SHCHARANSKIY AND FILATOV TRIALS
WITH A LENGTHY, UNSIGNED COMMENTARY READ IN FULL
ON THE POPULAR EVENING TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAM
"VREMYA" JULY 14 (THE COMMENTARY WAS CLEVERLY SAND-

WICHED IN, AT A MOMENT OF HIGH VIEWER INTEREST, BETWEEN THE SPORTS NEWS AND THE WEATHER FORECAST) AND PRINTED IN PRAVDA AND OTHER MAJOR PAPERS JULY 15. SOVIET NEWS MEDIA HAVE SAID ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT THE GINSBURG TRIAL. THE TASS WIRE LATE JULY 13 AND JULY 14 CARRIED REPORTS (NOT CARRIED BY DOMESTIC MEDIA) ON THE SHCHARANSKIY AND FILATOV TRIALS. THE TASS WIRE ALSO RAN TWO PIECES INTENDED TO COUNTER-ACT WESTERN CRITICISM OF THE SHCHARANSKIY AND GINZBURG TRIALS. AS BEFORE, NEITHER THE USG NOR ANY AMERICAN IS NAMED IN CONNECTION WITH SHCHARANSKIY OR FILATOV. END SUMMARY.

1. THE COMMENTARY, ENTITLED "AS DESERVED," INDICATES THAT BY STAGING THE FILATOV AND SHCHARANSKIY TRIALS SIMULTANEOUSLY, SOVIET AUTHORITIES HOPED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SHCHARANSKIY, LIKE FILATOV, WAS A COMMON TRAITOR. THREE-FIFTHS OF THE COMMENTARY ARE DEVOTED TO SMEARING SHCHARANSKIY. AFTER DISCUSSION FILATOV, THE PIECE CLAIMS THAT "THE ANATOMY OF ANY BETRAYAL IS, AS A RULE, SIMILAR. THIS TRUTH IS CONFIRMED BY COMPARING THE PATHS WHICH LED BOTH CRIMINALS TO THE DOCK."

2. IN ATTEMPTING TO DISCREDIT SHCHARANSKIY, THE COMMENTARY PAINTS HIM AS BECOMING INVOLVED WITH WESTERN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES BECAUSE OF EGOTISM AND CONFIDENTIAL

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GREED. AFTER ATTEMPTING TO GAIN POPULARITY IN THE WEST BY SLANDERING THE SOVIET UNION, HE SUPPOSEDLY CAME TO THE ATTENTION OF ONE OF THE WESTERN "SPECIAL SERVICES" AND BECAME "A COMMON SPY." WITHOUT MENTIONING ROBERT TOTH, THE PIECE NOTES THAT "SHCHARANSKIY REGULARLY ASSISTED AN AGENT OF ONE OF THE WESTERN MILITARY INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES."

3. THE COMMENTARY ENDS WITH A BLAST AT "ANTI-COMMUNISTS AND ENEMIES OF DETENTE" WHO ALLEGEDLY USED THE SHCHARANSKIY TRIAL TO "SOW HOSTILITY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION AND DISCORD AMONG PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES." BUT THOSE WHO SHED "HYPOCRITICAL TEARS" SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT "BY DEFENDING A SPY, A TRAITOR AND A SLANDERER, THEY ARE SMEARING THEMSELVES WITH THE SAME FILTH IN WHICH SHCHARANSKIY WAS IMMERSSED TO HIS EARS."

4. TASS WIRE ITEMS OF LATE JULY 13 AND JULY 14 ON SHCHARANSKIY:

-- SUMMARIZE THE PROSECUTOR'S FINAL ARGUMENT,

WHICH APPARENTLY REPLAYED FAMILIAR THEMES CONCERNING
"CUNNING ACTIONS" OF WESTERN REACTIONARY CIRCLES IN
CAMOUFLAGING THEIR ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITIES AS
"DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS" AND IN USING "THE SO-CALLED
DISSIDENTS" FOR "SPYING AND SUBVERSIVE PLANS":

-- GIVE A SELECTIVE BUT RELATIVELY UNSLANTED SUMMARY
OF SHCHARANSKIY'S DEFENSE STATEMENT, BUT MAKE NO
MENTION OF HIS MOVING "FINAL WORD" TO THE COURT;

-- STATE THAT HIS GUILT WAS FULLY ESTABLISHED ON

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ALL COUNTS, THAT HE DESERVED THE MOST SEVERE PENALTY BUT
WAS GIVEN A LESSER SENTENCE BECAUSE OF HIS AGE AND
LACK OF PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS.

5. ON FILATOV:

-- TASS JULY 13 CONTINUED TO DESCRIBE FILATOV'S
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ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF "A FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE,"
AND SPOKE OF "DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL" CONFISCATED WHEN
"A FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, A DIPLOMAT" AND HIS
WIFE WERE CAUGHT REDHANDED IN SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR;

-- TASS SUMMARIZES THE PROSECUTOR'S SPEECH, WHICH
REPORTEDLY HIGHLIGHTED "THE CRIMINAL ACTIONS BY THE
REACTIONARY FORCES OF THE IMPERIALIST STATES" AND
NOTED "SLANDEROUS ANTI-SOVIET BROADCASTS OF FOREIGN
RADIO STATIONS" TO WHICH FILATOV SUPPOSEDLY LISTENED
"FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS";

-- TASS REPORTS THAT FILATOV WAS SENTENCED "TO BE
SHOT," AND THIS WAS "MET WITH APPROVAL BY REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT IN THE COURTROOM"

6. THE TASS WIRE HAS ALSO BEGUN TO CARRY PIECES
REACTING TO WESTERN CRITICISM. ONE ITEM TAKES SENATOR
JACKSON TO TASK FOR PROPOSING THAT GINZBURG AND
SHCHARANSKIY BE NOMINATED FOR THE NOBEL PRIZE, AND
WONDERS WHY HE DIDN'T ALSO NOMINATE FILATOV. ANOTHER
REPLAYS A "VOLKSSTIMME" ARTICLE
CHARACTERIZING WESTERN CRITICISM OF THE SHCHARANSKIY
TRIAL AS A "SLANDER CAMPAIGN AIMED AT TORPEDOING
THE PROCESS OF DETENTE." AT THIS WRITING, TASS
HAS NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED STATEMENTS ON THE TRIALS
MADE BY THE PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY AND ADMINISTRATION
SPOKESMEN.

7. COMMENT. THE WIDELY-PUBLICIZED COMMENTARY ON
FILATOV AND SHCHARANSKIY APPARENTLY IS INTENDED TO
CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGES TO THE SOVIET PUBLIC:

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-- SHCHARANSKIY, LIKE FILATOV, IS A COMMON TRAITOR
LED TO THIS GRAVE CRIME BY PERSONAL WEAKNESSES (AS
OPPOSED TO ANY GENUINE CONCERN OVER PROBLEMS WITHIN
THE USSR);

-- THE REAL VILLAINS IN BOTH CASES WERE WESTERN
"REACTIONARY CIRCLES," WHO THROUGH THEIR INTELLIGENCE
SERVICES EXPLOITED THE WEAKNESSES OF THESE TWO MEN
TO HARM THE SOVIET UNION;

-- THE FUSS OVER SHCHARANSKIY IN THE WEST REPRESENTS
A CYNICAL, HYPOCRITICAL ATTEMPT TO FAN ANTI-SOVIET
FEELINGS AND TO UNDERMINE DETENTE.

8. OUR THOUGHTS ON THE OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
TRIALS AND THEIR AFTERMATH WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF
A SEPARATE TELEGRAM. MATLOCK

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